

Sub #3 1. In a computer network including a server computer system network  
attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, a method of authenticating a subset of  
the plurality of client computer systems and/or users thereof, the method comprising the  
following:

an act of the server computer system receiving a request from a requesting  
client computer system, the request including an instruction identifying the  
authentication methodology that is to be used when authenticating the subset of  
client computer systems and/or users thereof;

an act of the server computer system receiving a request for service from  
the subset of client computer systems; and

an act of the server computer system authenticating the subset of the client  
computer systems using at least the authentication methodology identified in the  
instruction.

2. The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at  
least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating  
the subset of client computer systems.

3. The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at  
least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating  
the subset of client computer systems.

1           4.       The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at  
2 least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the  
3 subset of client computer systems.

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5           5.       The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at  
6 least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the  
7 subset of client computer systems.

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9           6.       The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the subset of client  
10 computer systems is a single client computer system.

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12           7.       The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the request comprises a  
13 data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

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15           8.       A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for  
16 performing the acts recited in Claim 1.

1 9. In a computer network including a server computer system network  
2 attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, a method of authenticating a subset of  
3 the plurality of client computer systems and/or users thereof, the method comprising the  
4 following:

5 an act of the server computer system receiving a request from a requesting  
6 client computer system, the request including an instruction identifying <sup>com</sup> the  
7 authentication methodology that is to be used when authenticating the subset of  
8 client computer systems and/or users thereof;

9 a step for the server computer system authenticating the subset of the client  
10 computer systems and/or users thereof using at least the authentication  
11 methodology identified in the instruction. ?

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13 10. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the step for <sup>com</sup> the server  
14 computer system authenticating comprises the following:

15 an act of the server computer system receiving a request for service from  
16 the subset of client computer systems; and

17 an act of the server computer system authenticating the subset of the client  
18 computer systems using at least the authentication methodology identified in the  
19 instruction.

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21 11. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the instruction includes at  
22 least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating  
23 the subset of client computer systems.  
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12. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

13. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

14. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

15. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

16. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

17. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the act and step recited in Claim 9.

1 18. In a computer network including a server computer system network  
2 attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, a method of controlling a type of  
3 authentication methodology used when the server computer system authenticates a subset  
4 of the plurality of computer systems and/or users thereof, the method comprising the  
5 following:

6 an act of a requesting client computer system composing a request including  
7 an instruction identifying the authentication methodology that is to be used when  
8 authenticating the subset of client computer systems and/or users thereof; and  
9 a specific act of the requesting client computer system transmitting the  
10 request to the server computer system.

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12 19. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes  
13 at least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating  
14 the subset of client computer systems.

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16 20. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes  
17 at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in  
18 authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

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20 21. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes  
21 at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the  
22 subset of client computer systems.

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22. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

23. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

24. The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

25. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts recited in Claim 18.

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26. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure having a plurality of fields, the data structure comprising:

a client identifier field that identifies a subset of client computer systems and/or users thereof that are connected to a server computer system; and

an authentication field that identifies one or more authentication methods to be used to ~~the server computer system~~ when authenticating any of the subset of client computer systems and/or users thereof.

27. The computer-readable medium in accordance with Claim 26, wherein the client identifier field identifies a single client computer system.